



# Bagram News Express

Start Right, Finish Strong | Vol. 3 Issue 14, October 11, 2009

## Airmen Use Football Rivalry to Help Afghans



### FRIENDLY RIVALRY

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan -- Major Tobin Griffeth and Capt. Katie Illingworth, Contract and Fiscal lawyers with Combined Joint Task Force 82's Office of the Staff Judge Advocate stand together in front of a large group of Humvees. Major Griffeth and Captain Illingworth created a game that would harness the energy of fan support for the University's of Texas and Oklahoma's heated rivalry. Donations of clothes, shoes and school supplies are sent in to the duo where they help distribute it country-wide to ground patrols to help the Afghan people. "This war will be one person at a time, and through the children," Major Griffeth said. (U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Felicia Juenke)

**By Capt. David Faggard**  
455th Air Expeditionary Wing  
Public Affairs

**BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan** -- In a Soviet-era aircraft hangar here, a rivalry born during America's Civil War and the Battle of the Red River, is still alive and well - although now that energy is supporting the Afghan people.

Major Tobin Griffeth, an avid University of Texas fan, and Capt. Katie Illingworth an University of Oklahoma alum, created a personal game honoring the two schools' annual rivalry which every year is the talk of the two bordering states. They enlist family-member sup-

port back home giving one point to the corresponding school which donates one box of items like school supplies, clothes and shoes to the people of Afghanistan.

Texas is in the lead with 10-0 points over Oklahoma, but according to the captain, "boxes are coming."

"Yeah right," the major quipped to the captain flashing a "Hook 'em Horns" hand-signal to the captain.

"We started this because it's the right thing to do," Major Griffeth, a Schertz, Texas native and graduate of University of Texas, Arlington, said. "In a war where we'll spend millions

on bombs or missiles, it only makes sense to spend money on clothes, or socks" the major said reflecting on personal observations of the Coalition counter insurgency.

"I think this is a basic way we could help stop the Taliban and the insurgency -- by winning their hearts and minds," the major, a graduate of North Kentucky's Law School said. "It's also a way for Americans back home to get out there and start helping. They [Afghans] don't have much and they hear

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# RIVALRY

nothing but bad things about America."

They team with Army Task Forces on the ground and the local Chaplaincy who often meet with local village elders, country-wide, to distribute the aid given from Texas and Oklahoma citizens.

War puts the rivalry game in perspective.

"It's somewhat trivial," Captain Illingworth, an Oklahoma City native and OU graduate said about the rivalry game back home. "But, it's not as trivial as some think. Our rivalry is a big deal and this is a unique channel that allows people back home to support their teams and support America. The en-

ergy is there already; we're just trying to re-direct it somewhere else."

The group asks that no food or money be sent, but donations of winter clothes, school supplies and shoes are accepted.

The game started when the two officers were asked by their families what could be done to help. Soon, a U.S. Postal worker in Texas started to send boxes as well, and now college fraternities, churches and an Eagle Scout are assisting. Even the hometowns are involved and donations are streaming in, according to the captain.

It's the goal of the two to get help from other universities too. They hope other college rivalries start and mentioned the Alabama, Auburn rivalry, as

well as the Army and Navy rivalry.

Major Griffeth is deployed from Randolph Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas and Capt. Illingworth is deployed from Hickam AFB, Hawaii. Captain Illingworth is a graduate of Catholic University's Law School in Washington, D.C. The lawyers are deployed supporting Operation Enduring Freedom's Combined Joint Task Force 82 in the Office of the Staff Judge Advocate. They are both fiscal and contracting lawyers.

Donations can be sent via flat-rate priority boxes: CJTF-82-OSJA APO AE 09354, addressed to Major Griffeth for Texas or Captain Illingworth for OU.



## ARRIVING ON THE FLIGHTLINE

**BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan --** Two mine-resistant, ambush-protected all-terrain vehicles arrived at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan, on Oct. 1, after being offloaded from a C-17 Globemaster III. The M-ATVs arrived less than a day after leaving Charleston Air Force Base, S.C., Sept. 30.

The M-ATVs are the first of their kind in Afghanistan and support small-unit combat operations in highly restricted rural, mountainous and urban environments that include mounted patrols, reconnaissance, security, convoy protection, communications, command and control and combat service support.

Transporting M-ATVs by aircraft can be accomplished in a day, where sealift would require approximately 26 days. An order for more than 6,600 M-ATVs are expected to be fielded during the next year.

The M-ATV is designed to replace the up-armored Humvee in Afghanistan. The M-ATV will carry up to five personnel. The C-17 is from McChord Air Force Base, Wash., and was operated by a crew from Charleston AFB, S.C.

(U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Susan Tracy)



# Commander emphasizes physical fitness in combat zone

By Tech. Sgt. John Jung  
455th Air Expeditionary Wing  
Public Affairs

**BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan** -- You better make sure you're physically fit - that is the bottom line from Brig. Gen. Steven Kwast, 455th Air Expeditionary Wing commander.

At a location where an enemy attack might happen, and the climate and terrain are demanding, physical fitness is a prerequisite. At a weekly combat orientation here, the general made this clear to several dozen newly arrived Airmen.

Dressed in their Air Force physical training uniforms, this group of Airmen were the first to have their physical fitness assessed as they arrived in the Area of Responsibility to be used as a baseline for progress.

This was not an official PT test but something the general wanted the Airmen to have so they could track their progress as they moved through their deployment.

"I'm challenging you to work out every single day; to make sure you're in shape for whatever comes your way," the general said.

The general equated getting physically stronger with being more mentally acute as well.

"The simple act of working out every single day not only proves and shapes self-discipline and self-control, it



**BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan** -- Airmen assigned to the 455th Air Expeditionary Wing perform sit-ups for a baseline physical fitness test here. The test was not an official PT test, but rather something Gen. Steven Kwast, 455th AEW commander, wanted his Airmen to have so they could track their progress as they moved through their deployment. (U.S. Air Force photo/Tech. Sgt. John Jung)

makes you a mentally stronger person. It makes you better able to push through mental and physical barriers," the general said.

"You'd better make sure you are physically fit," he finished and walked out of the assembly.

Believing in leading from the front, the general returned moments later, as the Airmen started to assemble for their baseline PT test, in his PT uniform to perform push-ups, sit-ups and run alongside his Wingmen.



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# Air Force C-130 dedicated to Army's 82nd Airborne

By Tech. Sgt. John Jung  
455th Air Expeditionary Wing  
Public Affairs

An Air Force C-130H Hercules was dedicated to the Soldiers of the Army's 82nd Airborne Division stationed in Afghanistan, here recently.

The transport was originally dedicated at Pope Air Force Base, N.C., Oct. 25, 2008, to Fort Bragg's entire 82nd Airborne Division based in North Carolina.

Tail number 79282 from the 440th Airlift Wing, Air Force Reserve, Pope AFB, has official nose art prominently displaying an American eagle in flight surrounding the iconic 82nd Airborne's insignia wings on the aircraft's fuselage. The plane also sports "Bragg-Pope" on its tail flash representing the close relationship between Fort Bragg and Pope AFB.

Utilizing the Total Force, an active duty crew deployed from the 2nd Airlift Squadron, an associate unit of the 440th AW, flew the Reserve C-130 Hercules to Bagram. The crew was comprised of Captains Alan Rathjen and Laura Easton, both C-130 pilots, and Staff Sgt. Matt Metz, C-130 loadmaster.

"The aircraft is being dedicated to the 82nd in honor of the cohesion of the Air Force and the Army in the fight in Afghanistan," said St. Louis native Captain Rathjen, 774th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron.

While the dedication was symbolic in nature, the tangible effects of the C-130 are felt everyday by Airmen and Soldiers alike.

"A few days ago we airdropped MREs [meals ready to eat] and water down to soldiers at a FOB [forward operating base]," said Captain Easton,



**BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan -- Servicemembers assembled on the flightline to tour a C-130 Hercules, from the 440th Airlift Wing at Pope Air Force Base, N.C. The C-130 was dedicated to the Army's 82nd Airborne Division in honor of the cohesion of the Air Force and the Army in Afghanistan. (U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Felicia Juenke)**

774th EAS. "It's the mission we trained for at the 2nd AS and [one] we're ready to employ here for the joint fight," said the Pittsburg native.

"I came here to be a part of history," said Army Master Sgt. John Plasse, 38th Infantry Division, Afghan National Security Forces Liaison. "It's great to have something you've worked in, flown into and out of combat with... and then it's gotten you home safely all those times... dedicated to you and your fellow Soldiers," said the activated Indiana Army Guardsman, who is from Terra Haute, Ind.

Bringing critical supplies via airdrop to soldiers on the ground is what the Hercules is suited to and is excelling at in Afghanistan. The "Herks" here at Bagram have averaged between five and eight tons of cargo per airdrop mission.

Continuing the overall mission to feed, fuel and arm the fight, September marked the

fourth consecutive month in which an increase of supplies was airdropped by the Air Force to Coalition partners and local citizens across Afghanistan.

In total, 4.1 million pounds of goods were dropped to forward operating bases, combat outposts and other austere locations in support of ground forces.

"It's our day-to-day job," said Staff Sgt. Matt Metz, 774th EAS. "I'm proud to have brought this C-130 to Afghanistan for the dedication, but I'm more gratified being the loadmaster who gets to airdrop [supplies] to the guys on the ground," continued the Springfield, Va., native.

Airdrops have proven to be a safe and reliable method for delivering vital supplies into locations where roads don't exist, the terrain is too mountainous, the cargo is too heavy for helicopters or where the insurgent threat is too great.



# NEWS BRIEFS

**IMMUNIZATIONS:** Are your immunizations up to date? Active duty members are required to stay current on all immunizations during their deployment. Report to your nearest medical treatment facility to check your status and get vaccinated. For questions, contact Task Force Medical Public Health, 431-4426.

**NEWCOMERS INPROCESSING:** All Air Force members are required to inprocess with PERSCO. The inprocessing will start your combat pay entitlements. If you have been in the AOR for at least 30 days and you are not receiving combat pay, visit Finance in the crow's nest tower on Camp Cunningham. If you know for a fact that you did not inprocess with PERSCO, please visit PERSCO located in Bldg. 700 near the passenger terminal. Call 431-2070/4409 for more information.

**COMBAT O:** Combat Orientation is Friday, Oct. 16 at 0100Z/0530L at the MWR Clamshell. Uniform is Air Force PT uniform for fitness assessment. This is a mandatory briefing for all Air Force personnel assigned to Bagram Airfield. Accountability is tracked and will be forwarded to the first sergeants.



**Victim Advocate training for the 455th AEW Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program.**

No experience needed | Men and women welcome  
All ranks are encouraged to participate.

Training will be 0700 - 1700, 29-30 October  
in the **Safety Conference Room**  
(First floor of the Crows Nest in Camp Cunningham).

If you are interested, please contact Capt Tabitha Stump:  
**431-4060** or [tabitha.stump@bgab.afcent.af.mil](mailto:tabitha.stump@bgab.afcent.af.mil)



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